

# Frequently Asked Questions about ARTICLE 12

## Article 12 is now a Substitute Motion

### *To Establish a Committee to Study Use of Artificial Turf And Pause New Installations on Town Land Until the Study is Complete* **2023 Arlington Annual Town Meeting**

*"What began as a so-called miracle, groundbreaking technology, meant for practicality and convenience, quickly became one of the most pressing environmental and public health concerns in the modern world"*

~ Michael Regan, EPA Administrator, press conference on PFAS, March 14, 2023

#### **What does the Article 12 Substitute Motion propose?**

The Article 12 Substitute Motion would establish a committee to study the use of artificial turf in Arlington in regards to the health and safety of users, environmental impacts, and cost. The Substitute Motion would temporarily pause any new installations of artificial turf on Town property until the study is complete.

#### **Why is the Article 12 Substitute Motion being proposed at this time?**

In response to the Arlington Public Land Management Plan (PLMP) which suggests consideration of artificial turf. <https://tinyurl.com/LandMgtPlan> (pgs. 290 & 295).

#### **How long will the moratorium on the use of artificial turf last?**

Until the study committee submits its report to Town Meeting but no later than April, 2025. Other MA communities are instituting moratoriums of 3 or 5 years, and a few have asked for indefinite moratoriums.

#### **Are other communities concerned about further use of artificial turf?**

**Yes.** Boston, Concord, Littleton, Sharon, and Wayland have imposed moratoriums; many other communities are currently considering them.

#### **Is artificial turf recyclable?**

**Not at this time.** Most artificial turf fields end up in landfills because it is too costly to recycle.

#### **What about the high school's artificial turf?**

The high school is exempted from the moratorium called for in the Article 12 Substitute Motion.

#### **Does Arlington need more playing time on its fields?**

Absolutely, but not at the expense of the long-term health of children and the environment. Hurd Field behind Trader Joes is an example of how natural grass playing fields can be made to be durable and robust when designed with proper drainage for improved access...and at a fraction of the costs of artificial turf.

#### **Does the Article 12 Substitute Motion ban the use of artificial turf?**

**No.** It calls for a temporary pause on new installations so the town can better study all potential impacts.

#### **Why do we need to study artificial turf?**

There is growing scientific evidence about the dangers of "forever chemicals" known as PFAS used in making artificial turf. The EPA recently banned six of the most toxic PFAS, finding that even miniscule amounts can cause serious health issues in humans. PFAS is in many products; it leaches into waterways and accumulates in our bodies and food sources. Liability worries recently prompted 3M to halt its manufacture of all PFAS chemicals.

#### **Is artificial turf less expensive to maintain than organically managed natural grass?**

**No.** Studies from UMass Lowell, Cornell and others indicate that, compared to professionally installed grass fields, artificial turf is more expensive to install and to maintain by as much as 2.5 times over the life of the field. According to the Toxics Use Reduction Institute, TURI, at UMass Lowell, properly installed, organically managed natural grass fields can be used as much as artificial turf fields.

#### **Are there potential liability issues with artificial turf?**

**Yes.** Liability is a rapidly growing concern because of accelerating regulatory trends, environmental violations, premature failure of artificial turf fields, class action suits, and personal injury claims. Suits against manufacturers are evolving to include suits against places that use PFAS-containing materials. Insurers are starting to deny coverage for claims relating to PFAS, with some saying this will become like asbestos, resulting in years of legal bills and exposure: <https://tinyurl.com/FAQliability>



#### **Learn more about artificial turf:**

<https://tinyurl.com/ArtificialResources>

#### **Contact your Town Meeting Members & urge their support for this Substitute Motion!**

- <https://tinyurl.com/WheresMyPrecinct>
- <https://tinyurl.com/WhosMyTownRep>